



Strijdom van der Merwe







Strijdom van der Merwe,
Artist in Residence @ WhiteSpaceBlackBox,
23 February – 26 March 2019

«WAVE»

Landart Installation: Reed, Nature, 2.3 x 3 x 20 m

Artist: Strijdom van der Merwe (*1961), Stellenbosch/ZA

Place: WhiteSpaceBlackBox, Neuchâtel

Created for the exhibition «Ephemera – Εφήμερα» during a one-month residency at WhiteSpaceBlackBox, Lake Neuchâtel in the heart of Switzerland, the artistic installation «WAVE» allows to take a completely fresh point of view on our familiar and everyday environment. Inspired by the lake and local materials, reed popped up as first material of choice for the artist. The shape of the wave was naturally given by the movement and dynamics of the lake. «WAVE» starts from the ground as a low and airy installed work, rearing up and getting denser through the 20 meters of installation length to a height of 2.30 meters, thus connecting with the lake.

As a walkable sculpture, this work can be admired from outside, but also from walking into it. The feeling in midst of the work allows for a totally new perspective through the connected reeds to the outside.

Depending on the position of the sun or an optional illumination at nighttime, the shadows of the work produce wonderful drawings into the grass, onto people near the work and onto the surrounding architecture.

«WAVE» is an ephemeral artwork in communication with nature. During the year it is taken over by nature again – grass and other plants start interweaving with the structure and grow into it again. The wind plays with the reeds. Nature takes back what was given from her – a gift from the artist back to nature again.

Next to the huge installation, artist Strijdom van der Merwe discovered multiple situations during his daily walks along the lakeside, drawing his attention to them: shore and underwater situations, light and shadow moments, plants, earth, traces. He had the inspiration to create ephemeral works out of these momentary discoveries that only could have been produced in that very moment. Some of these he froze into photographs which are part of the ephemeral exhibition as single editions.

Van der Merwes work often focuses on the daily seen unseen. Onto things that have become embedded in our daily life and that we do not recognize anymore. It is a meditational way, teaching us to discover and value ephemeral moments in their time and at their place, thus linking the two dimensions time and space again, which drifted more and more apart in our society.

His landart makes us realize that certain things in life can only be seized in a single moment and it reopens eyes and other senses to valorize a place or an object in a new and enriched way.

Friederike Schmid, Curator





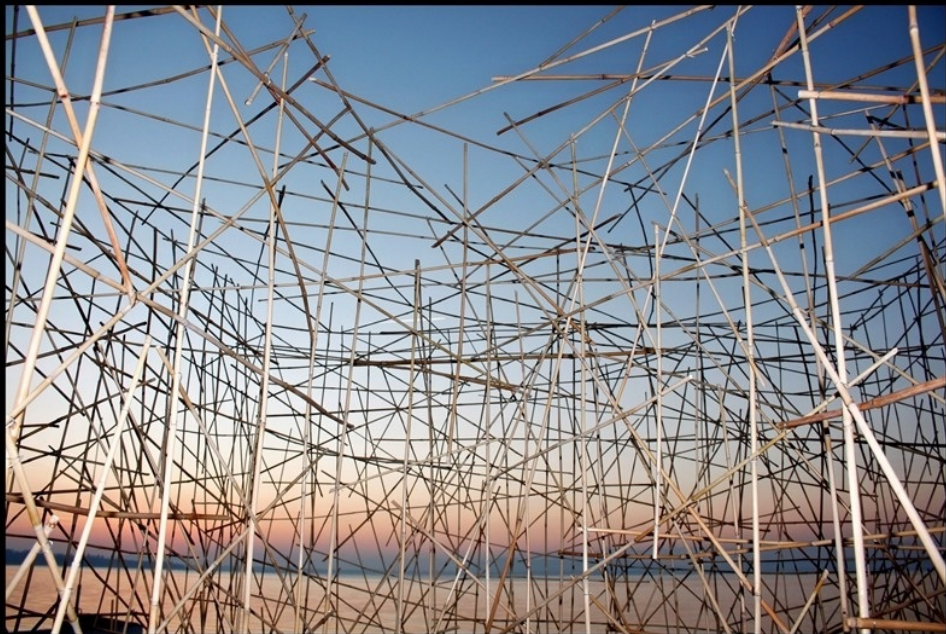
















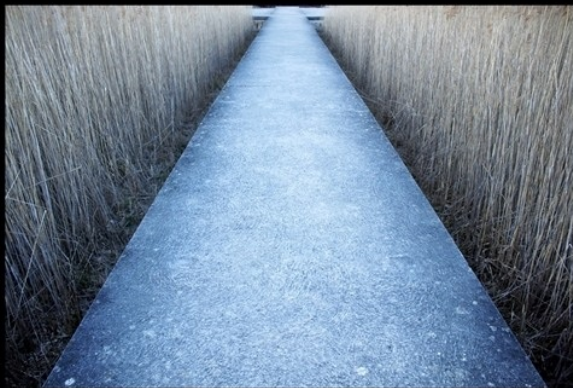














Strijdom van der Merwe

Strijdom van der Merwe (*1961) works and lives in Stellenbosch/ZA.

He studied art at the University of Stellenbosch (Stellenbosch/ZA), the Hooge School voor de Kunste (Utrecht/NL), the Academy of Art and Architecture (Prague/CZ) and the Kent Institute of Art and Design (Canterbury/GB).

Among the many decorations he received are the Jackson Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant, a medal of honour from the South African Academy of Arts and Science, the Prince Claus grant in Amsterdam and the Kanna award at the Oudtshoorn Arts Festival for best visual art projection in a musical collaboration. He was nominated for the Daimler Chrysler award for sculpture in public spaces, was a finalist for the International Award for Public Art, established to increase visibility for public art internationally, and won the It's LIQUID International Contest, First Edition 2012, in Italy for sculpture and installation. In 2015 he collaborated to win the ATKV Aartvark award for most innovative work at the Aardklop Arts Festival in Potchefstroom.

He participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions in South Africa and abroad and his work was acquired by private and public collections all over the world.

In 2013 he was festival artist at both the Aardklop Arts Festival and the Fjellfestival in Andelsnes, Norway. Van der Merwe was a member of the curatorial panel for World Design Capital Cape Town 2014 and is a founding member of Site Specific South Africa. He was co-curator of the Exhibition of 30 Nature Artists in the World (2015) and the Global Nomadic Art Project (2015–2016) in South Korea.

Imagine a place. In a unique setting. On a lakeshore. In the heart of Switzerland. A spectacular view. And a stunning piece of architecture. A white sheet of paper, ready for your inspirations. A place to work on the black box of today's unanswered questions for a better tomorrow. It may be beyond your imagination, but it is real. It's called WhiteSpaceBlackBox. It is a nodal point to think and change. It is a place to work. A think-lab. A top-level hideaway. A strategic retreat. It is also a place to create. A residency for internationally renowned artists. And it is a platform for exchanging out-of-the box thinking at unique table-d'hôte events.



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